Looking to Lisbon

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Thank you for that kind introduction. It's wonderful to be here and talking with you this evening, and especially this venue, Ecole Militaire.

In January, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke from this very podium to reaffirm America's support for a strong and secure Europe. At the core of her message was the idea that while the world is changing rapidly, our fundamental principles, as embodied in Europe's security institutions, charters, and treaties, remain as relevant and vibrant today as they have ever been. That what we – the transatlantic community of nations – built together over more than half a century, is still vital to our security today.

Our transatlantic bond, Secretary Clinton observed, has been "a cornerstone of global security and a powerful force for global progress." At the same time, she called for change in European security broadly to reflect the transformation that is taking place in the world and on this continent.

Today, I want to take this theme further, and explain what the call for change means for the Atlantic Alliance – an Alliance, by the way, that has been immeasurably strengthened by France's decision last year to rejoin the Alliance's military structures.

France is a great Ally

From the time of Lafayette, France has been a great Ally of the United States. American and French soldiers have stood shoulder-to-shoulder for well over two hundred years – and on nearly every continent. Together, we birthed the modern era of military aviation, as the monument to L'Escadrille de Lafayette in Marnes-la-Coquette can attest. And now, we've even traveled together in space.

One of my favorite examples of the Franco-American alliance stems from the Cuban missile crisis, when former U.S. Secretary of State Acheson came to brief President de Gaulle. [Interestingly enough, one account says Acheson was accompanied by several officers from the American delegation to NATO, which, of course, was still at Paris at the time.]

Secretary Acheson offered to share U-2 photographs of the missile sites. But President de Gaulle said, "Not at all, not now. This is mere evidence, and a great nation such as yours would not take a serious step if there was any doubt about the evidence at all. Therefore, for our purposes, the missiles are there." President de Gaulle said to tell President Kennedy that France would support him. Years later, Secretary Acheson recounted how President de Gaulle's remarks struck him at the time – that de Gaulle said not "I will support" nor "my government will support." Instead, de Gaulle had conveyed that America could once again rely on its ally France.

After the attacks of 9/11, France was early to the fight in Afghanistan, supporting American special forces on the ground with French airpower to roll back the Taliban and al Qaeda's safe haven. Today, France is a major troop contributor to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

And now, France is fully integrated into NATO's military structures. France brings not only tremendous capabilities to the Alliance – but also a strategic mindset to military affairs. And we appreciate that you have posted one of your top officers – General Stéphane Abrial, the former Chief of Staff of the French Air Force – as Supreme Allied Commander Transformation.

At ACT, General Abrial leads the transformation of Alliance forces, capabilities, and doctrine. He is working on an agenda of change that the United States takes very seriously – and supports vigorously – across the Alliance.

General Abrial, for example, is responsible for NATO's efforts to develop more robust capabilities for countering improvised explosive devices – a key challenge faced by the 150,000 ISAF personnel based in Afghanistan. But he is also responsible for a longer view, and his military advice will be key as the Alliance postures NATO toward 21st century security concerns.

And with all Allies looking to drive greater efficiency and effectiveness into their defense spending – to get, to put it more colloquially, "more bang for the proverbial buck" – we will be relying on his advice even more in the years ahead. Indeed, the closure of U.S. Joint Forces Command in Norfolk means that we – like all Allies – will look to Gen Abrial and his team to help lead our transformation.

Tonight, I'd like to focus on this agenda of change that General Abrial and so many others – especially the United States – are eager to see take hold across the Alliance.

Just last week, NATO held an unprecedented joint ministerial of all NATO foreign and defense ministers, including Secretary Clinton and Secretary Gates, and Ministers Kouchner and Morin. Ministers advanced several key items for the Lisbon Summit, where 28 leaders of the Alliance will meet in just a few weeks.

NATO is on track for the most transformative Summit in recent memory, and the United States has two key goals:

First, that we revitalize the Alliance and shape NATO into a 21st century security organization; and

Second, that we poise ISAF for success in Afghanistan through trainers, transition, and an enduring partnership.

Goal one: Revitalize the Alliance

Tonite, I want to concentrate my remarks on the first of these goals, and leave the details of the second to Q & A.

At Lisbon, revitalizing the Alliance will start with a new Strategic Concept – one that will guide NATO for the next decade.

<u>House that NATO Built</u>

The new Strategic Concept will start with NATO's enduring, unchanging foundation – our shared values. As Allies, we share a commitment to the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. This is why we are Allies.

Because of these shared values, we face shared challenges – challenges that are handled more successfully if we act together rather than alone. That is why we have NATO.

Sometimes I find it helpful to use the metaphor of NATO as a house – a strong mansion really. Like any house, it starts with the foundation – and the community of values that we represent are that foundation. The house could not stand without them.

Atop this foundation stand two pillars that represent NATO's two core tasks: collective defense and cooperative security.

Collective defense stems from Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which states that an attack on one is an attack on all. Each ally, and its security concerns, is equally important. Security, in this sense, is indivisible.

Some of our Allies are interested in visible reassurance. This reassurance gives them confidence, and makes room for more progressive ideas about partnership and reform as the Alliance moves ahead.

For other Allies, visible reassurance is less necessary. All of these national prerogatives have a place within the Alliance, and all members share – and air – their views to reach a balanced consensus about NATO operations and planning.

All Allies share concerns about NATO's deterrence posture. They want to ensure that the Alliance has the right capabilities to meet today's needs, such as countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, malicious cyber activity, transnational terrorism, and spillover from fragile states. A central task facing the Alliance is to be able to meet the collective defense commitment in an era of new threats and challenges. I'll talk more about how in a minute.

The second pillar in this "house that NATO built" is cooperative security.

As Secretary Clinton said during the NATO ministerial last week, "just as the United States relies on partners to further its security goals, NATO needs partners too. NATO's partners can complement and amplify its efforts to achieve stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond."

Today's security environment is globalized, complex, and unpredictable. Threats move quickly from one country to the next, and no single country has a monopoly on how to protect its population and territory from harm. No nation – not even the United States – need, nor should, face the daunting challenges of today on its own.

Neither should NATO.

By working with its partners, NATO can shape this environment so that threats don't materialize. And if threats do materialize, working with others allows for a better and more effective response.

A lot of countries agree with this philosophy. In Afghanistan, for example, 47 countries now contribute forces on the ground – 19 of them are Partners rather than Allies. Several others provide financial and in-kind support to ISAF and the government of Afghanistan – including Japan and Russia.

Which leads to some really interesting questions. Why is it that partners from all corners of the globe flock to partnership with NATO? What makes working with NATO so attractive to so many?

The reason is simple. We live in a time in which distant dangers have local impact – and in which the ability of other countries to provide security and opportunity for its citizens affects our own. If a country like Afghanistan can't provide for its own security, many countries around the world suffer the consequences.

Partnerships aren't just nice talk – they are vital to our national security. Through partnerships, nations share the burden, and reap the benefit, of creating a safer and more prosperous world.

And while NATO reserves the right to make its own decisions, we also work hard at NATO headquarters to make sure that NATO's partners have a hand in shaping Alliance decisions that affect them.

Our commitment to consulting with others is why NATO Secretary General Rasmussen asked the Group of Experts to travel widely – to include Moscow – when developing its recommendations for the Strategic Concept. And it's why we regularly meet in ISAF format at NATO headquarters – bringing NATO's 28 Allies together with 19 troop contributing nations – and will do the same at the Lisbon Summit in November.

So given the importance of partnerships for today's security climate, it's hardly surprising that NATO's pillar of cooperative security is growing sturdier every year.

What is baffling, though, if you don't mind me digressing for just a minute, is that NATO doesn't have a real strategic partnership with the EU.

Yes, NATO's North Atlantic Council and the EU's Political and Security Committee meet – but only a single time this year. And the only thing we discussed was Bosnia-Herzegovina. I find it very strange that NATO and EU operate in many of the same security spaces – Afghanistan, the Balkans, and the Gulf of Aden – but that we don't meet at a political level to discuss these topics.

NATO Secretary General Rasmussen has a plan for moving forward, and the U.S. supports its efforts. But his plan won't be successful unless the 21 countries that share membership in both organizations – to include France – help push the effort forward in the EU.

Ok, now back on script.

Holding these two pillars of collective defense and cooperative security in place – and completing the house that NATO built – is the Alliance's roof. Like any roof, it needs to be solidly constructed so it can withstand strong storms – especially storms that blow new threats into the Euro-Atlantic neighborhood.

NATO's roof is solid – it always has been – because of two things.

First, NATO's roof is solid because of the capabilities that Allies bring to the table. National capabilities are the plywood, tarpaper, and shingles for that roof.

But that's not enough. To raise the roof, you also need glue, screws, and nails. That's where NATO's common funding, shared standards, agreed doctrine, integrated command structure, and common capabilities come into the picture.

After all, NATO's strength doesn't just come from the nations. Its strength also comes from binding national contributions into a cohesive whole.

For example, NATO has an integrated military command structure; that way, the Alliance can control operations anywhere.

NATO also has common standards, doctrine, exercises, and training; because of these, the Alliance can field forces to operate together in any environment.

NATO also has common funding and multinational programs; that way, the Alliance can bring to bear key capabilities that few countries could buy for themselves. And NATO's common funding is an absolute bargain – only 0.3 percent of the combined total of Allies' defense budgets.

Not only that – the United States pays 22% of the total bill! Which means that for every 10 cents that the major European Allies put into the pot, they get a dollar's worth of defense back. To me, that means that we should be putting more into the common pot, not less.

And yes, all of us know that NATO needs to change – which is why we've set out such an ambitious agenda of reform for Lisbon. But I also agree with the NATO Secretary General and Secretary Gates. NATO reform should not be an excuse to cut budgets. NATO reform should instead be focused on doing a better job with what we are already spending.

And when we find savings, we should reinvest them into areas that need our attention.

<u>Organizational Reform</u>

So as I mentioned, the United States, like France and many other Allies, is very supportive of reforming the Alliance. We think these reforms are critical to its revitalization – to make sure the roof to NATO's house does not leak.

At the headquarters, for example, the number of NATO committees have been cut in half so that we can make decisions more quickly.

And in Lisbon, we anticipate NATO Leaders will approve a new military command structure that will be more flexible, more agile – and most importantly, more deployable. If approved and implemented, the new structure will return nearly 4,000 officers back to the nations. That way, Allies can reinvest this manpower to meet pressing needs, like bolstering front-line units and developing new capabilities.

By the way, that's exactly what we are doing in the United States right now. In the United States, all of the military Services have been tasked to reduce cumbersome headquarters structures, and to reinvest

those savings into front-line units and new capability areas. It's not about cuts – it's about streamlining the bureaucracy so that we can have less tail and more tooth.

And in addition to command structure reform, we also anticipate that NATO leaders will endorse principles for streamlining NATO's agencies, such as reducing from 14 to three agencies and finding savings through shared services.

And we expect the Secretary General will continue to use his existing authorities to revamp the NATO headquarters staffs. Doing so will ensure that organizational reform permeates across all of NATO, driving greater efficiency and effectiveness across the many pieces and parts of NATO's organization.

Capabilities Reform

Also on the agenda for Lisbon is reform of NATO's capabilities. At last week's ministerial, Defense Ministers endorsed a U.S.-proposed list of 10 critical capabilities for the Alliance to fund, acquire, and field. They forwarded the list to NATO Leaders for final approval. Some of these capabilities enable our forces to operate better in the field – like efforts to counter IEDs that are killing our soldiers and Afghan citizens and a computer network to integrate all of our national systems so that everyone can talk to each other and share information.

Others focus on new and emerging dangers – like the threat of missile proliferation and malicious cyber activity.

Missile Defense

The Obama Administration has laid out a new, more flexible approach for addressing the threat of ballistic missiles called the Phased, Adaptive Approach. The core idea is that every Ally should be able to "plug and play" its sensors and interceptors into a common, NATO-owned missile defense network. NATO has already funded this network to enable the defense of our forces. What we are looking to agree at Lisbon is to expand this capability so that we can defend our territory and populations. The cost to provide NATO with the capability to plug and play sensors and interceptors capable of defending against longer range missiles, like the U.S. PAA, will be less than €200 million – to be paid by 28 Allies over ten years. Even at a time of budgetary austerity, that, surely, is a cost we can and should be able to pay.

Cyber Defense

Cyber attacks are also emerging as a shared threat. Our networks are interconnected. Data moves easily from one domain to another, sometimes carrying malicious code that seeks to exploit the very connectivity that brings Allies together. Given the global nature of this threat, even a country as powerful as the United States cannot protect its cyberspace alone – nor can any of the Allies. So Allies must work together to protect this shared domain of cyberspace, and the cyber capabilities package proposed for Lisbon helps start NATO down that road.

Conclusion

I recognize that strengthening the house that NATO built is a tall order. But after our meeting last Thursday, when 56 Foreign and Defense Ministers came to Brussels to prepare for the Lisbon Summit

just five weeks hence, I am confident that the Alliance has the will and ability to agree to a new strategic concept, adopt the necessary reforms and acquire the necessary capabilities to revitalize our Alliance for the 21st Century. NATO after Lisbon will be a better and stronger Alliance than it is today.

So, in broad strokes, that is what we hope to achieve in Lisbon -- "building a better NATO" and finding areas where together we can strengthen the security and prosperity of the Euro-Atlantic space.

We're thrilled to have France back as a full partner in the Alliance, as it provides even greater opportunities to forge ahead in partnership. We look forward to meeting our shared goals together, and I'd be happy to take a few questions about the way ahead.